

creating safe and  
drug-free schools

volume nine number three



# THE CHALLENGE

With the right tools, resources, and guidance, most Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act (SDFSCA) grant recipients can implement all four of the U.S. Department of Education's Principles of Effectiveness rather easily. But one phrase within Principle #2 will make some educators nervous.

Principle #2 states that a SDFSCA grant recipient "with the assistance of a local or regional Advisory Council," should "establish a set of measurable goals and objectives and design its program to meet them." School systems have regularly established such goals and objectives. And the creation of a local or regional Advisory Council is not a new concept either. This phrase has always been part of the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act. But it still presents a serious challenge to teachers, school administrators, and prevention program developers.

Experienced educators and program developers recognize that community involvement can complicate program development—especially when the program content is perceived to be controversial in nature. However, excluding community members during the program's critical development phase will likely reduce crucial buy in by parents and other community members. Principle #2 reminds us that the safety and welfare of children is a responsibility shared between the educators and the community.

## VALUING COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

Although drug use and violence do not seem to be issues on which people disagree, they are topics on which few are neutral and virtually everyone has an opinion. Put two or more in a room to discuss alcohol and drug use, and violence and there will be two or more opinions. It is critical for educators to bear this in mind when they invite community involvement. Soliciting the community's advice and then limiting the discussion to a narrow set of predetermined parameters invites trouble. Educators must first be knowledgeable of the continuum of attitudes and beliefs

surrounding these issues and then be prepared to consider every point of view.

When discussing drugs understand the wide range of attitudes that may exist in your community. For example, some individuals might have a focus on crime and punishment. They might believe that drug use is criminal and that the appropriate response is, therefore, punishment. They might believe that sanctions should be applied to each offense. These individuals often arrive at their beliefs through experience. They might have known or have been

victims of behaviors by persons under the influence of alcohol or drugs. They may have suffered the

loss of a loved one in an accident caused by

a driver who was under the influence of alcohol or they may have experienced an incident perpetrated by a drug-affected individual. These experiences become the lens through which they respond to this issue.

Others might regard substance abuse primarily as a disease that requires treatment. They might believe that alcohol or drug use leads to a disease of chemical dependency, addiction, or alcoholism. They may have seen family members or friends who were addicted brought to recovery through self-help, twelve-step programs, or other interventions.

These are just two examples of many differing points of view and these perspectives are not mutually exclusive.

To succeed in building an Advisory Council to assist with program development, educators and program developers must be aware of and respect all beliefs expressed. To differentiate and divide these attitudes into categories of "true" and "false" will be counterproductive. Understanding and accepting the value of everyone's perceptions is the first and most important step in successfully building an Advisory Council.

An Advisory Council should bring together many views on the issues of alcohol, drugs, and violence through which its members can be exposed to others' perspectives. The job of the Advisory Council facilitator is to assure that there is space in the meeting

## COMMUNITY AND SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS

creating local or regional  
advisory councils for principle #2

by Judi Kosterman, Ed.D.

*Continued on page two*



### First, identify community members you would like to have participate

room for every point of view. To do otherwise would be to shut out those whose presence is necessary for broad community participation. If community members believe the school district has predetermined the “correct” beliefs and already outlined the “correct” program, the public will assume that their participation is irrelevant. This approach will reinforce any existing beliefs that the schools are rigid and bureaucratic. Once a welcoming conceptual framework that permits discussion of a wide range of individual points of view is established, then it’s time to actively invite community participation in a Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Advisory Council.

#### INVITING COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

The first step in building an Advisory Council is to identify the community members you would like to have participate. Although school districts have distinct geographic boundaries, those boundaries are often dissimilar from the other, more readily recognized boundaries of counties and cities.

Be certain from the beginning that those whose residency enables them to participate are aware of their eligibility. Under the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act (SDFSCA), a Local Educational Agency (LEA) must develop its grant application in consultation with a local or regional Advisory Council. The law states that this includes, to the extent possible: “representatives of local government, business, parents, students, teachers, pupil services personnel, appropriate state agencies, private schools, the medical profession, law en-

forcement, community-based organizations, and other groups with interest and expertise in drug and violence prevention.” If additional parameters are prescribed by a school board, beyond those just outlined, be certain to communicate clearly these parameters’ origins and rationales at the outset.

Next, identify the key leaders in the community who are central to both communication and action. Ask, “Who are the movers and shakers in this community?” Make a list and determine who has already demonstrated interest in and concern about the issues of alcohol, drugs, and violence. It is best to start with these individuals. Be strategic! Determine who is the best individual within the school system to contact and encourage each identified community leader to participate in the Advisory Council.

Understand that not everyone on your list will be able to participate at the desired level. However, contacting each community leader will ensure his or her familiarity with the Advisory Council and its important work. Those unable to participate still may provide valuable support to the Council’s work in the community. Active Council members and vocal supporters are both necessary. Such active and supportive leaders can be important champions—whether they participate directly on the Advisory Council or if they only express their support for the Council’s work.

The SDFSCA provides guidance on the Council’s work, which you will need to explain to your Council members as you are recruiting them. In addition to assisting the LEA in the development of its grant application, other responsibilities include:

- Disseminating information about drug and violence prevention programs, projects, and activities conducted within the boundaries of the LEA;
- Advising the LEA on how best to coordinate its activities with other related programs; and
- Reviewing program evaluations and other relevant material and making recommendations to the LEA on how to improve its drug and violence prevention programs.

This information will be important when you seek out the community’s key leaders who are willing to get involved or support the Advisory Council’s work. It will also help you when you begin recruiting other members for the Advisory Council. Beyond looking for key leaders, be certain to recruit at least two other kinds of members: (1) those who are willing thinkers and planners, and (2) those who are willing doers. Remember that

the work of the Council will require different skills and knowledge and it is not necessary for every member to be able to do everything within the Council’s scope of work.

Think of these Council members as players who bring their different gifts and talents to ultimately create a capable team. Some will thoroughly enjoy the process of planning and will attend the planning meetings and/or retreats. Others will not be interested in the process-laden planning necessary to the Council’s work. However, they will be waiting for assignments that result from the planning and will perform them eagerly. Both are necessary for success. The recruitment of these Council members requires a

*The Challenge continues its coverage of this topic, which state grant recipients must address.*

1. Base programs on a thorough assessment of the community.

2. With the assistance of a local advisory council (where required by the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act), establish a set of goals and design its programs to meet those goals.

3. Design and implement programs that provide evidence that they are effective in reducing drug use, violence, or disruptive behavior.

4. Evaluate programs periodically to determine if they are achieving its goals and objectives, and to refine, improve, and strengthen them as appropriate.

strategy equal to the one used to involve key leaders. Be sure to consider the diverse sectors of the community that should have representation on the Council. Here, too, it is important to determine who, within the school system, can best encourage an individual’s involvement.

Overall, the Advisory Council should represent the many points of view across the community’s continuum of attitudes and beliefs discussed earlier. Whatever attitudes and beliefs exist in the community, they will be reflected in community reaction to the Council’s work. To have these attitudes and beliefs inside the Council, benefiting from the discussion of the complexities of these issues, is more desirable than having them outside the Council, lacking information and yet scrutinizing the decisions made and programs developed.

This recruitment may seem labor intensive, as there clearly will be some



door-to-door work. But you can employ additional strategies to find new council members. Throughout every community, there are groups of people meeting regularly, who are interested in the community's health, safety, and welfare. Some groups already discuss the issues of alcohol, drugs, and violence; others do not. In either case, educators can request time on the agenda at these meetings to describe the role of the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Advisory Council and invite interested individuals to join a later discussion of the Council and its purpose. Educators, program developers, or other individuals involved in the formation of the Council who belong to these groups are the obvious

verage of The Principles of Effect-  
ents should:

assessment of objective data;

al or regional advisory council  
nd Drug-Free Schools and Com-  
f measurable goals and objectives  
et them;

ms based on research or evalua-  
the programs prevent or reduce  
ve behavior among youth;

ally to assess progress toward  
ves, and use the evaluation results  
hen programs and to refine goals

choices to make the presentation at such group meetings.

Another strategy for raising community awareness of the opportunity to participate in the Advisory Council is simply to publish it—through local newspapers, a community or school newsletter, bulletins within the religious community, or other viable communication channels. Be certain that, in every way and at every venue in which the Advisory Council is being introduced, three specific dimensions of the Council's work are consistently outlined: its goals, role, and processes. Clearly communicating these three aspects will help those considering involvement to assess the level of commitment required. Whether soliciting participation from an individual, presenting the opportunity to a group, or communicating through a publication, the expectations must be clear. Such clarity is an essential cornerstone of success.

## MAINTAINING COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Once the Advisory Council members are committed to participating, maintaining their ongoing involvement is essential. Nothing ensures the collapse of the Council's work more quickly than losing the active participation of its members. Some valuable points may be extracted from *Strategies for Fostering Resilience* (a presentation by R. Baruch, Ed.D. and S. Stutman, MA, MSW, BCD, at the 1993 World Mental Health Federation Conference). Rather than listing factors leading to increased risk among youth, it cites the qualities present in youth who are perceived to be successful. Consider applying these factors to ensuring an Advisory Council's success. They include the following:

- An acquired and recognized skill—something a person has learned to do that he or she and others recognize.
- A locus of control—personal power and self-efficacy in identifiable areas of a person's life.
- Hope—a sense of optimism (or faith) about the future and confidence of a person's role in it.
- Altruism—service to others and its value to the server as well as to the served.
- An adult anchor—a reliable adult in a person's life on whom he or she can depend.

An Advisory Council that promotes these qualities and stresses their importance to its membership will increase the probability of success. When the skill contributed by each member is acknowledged and recognized by the whole Council, that member's sense of his or her value as a participant increases. When there is a feedback loop measuring the progress of the Council's goals and attributing that progress to the contribution of each member, a sense of self-efficacy and the individual's sense of accomplishment are reinforced. When there is a clear vision of the future toward which the Council is working and the members share this vision, the level of optimism and hope will increase. When opportunities for advancing the Council's work are provided, individuals will find increased satisfaction in their ability to contribute to the effort. When Council members validate the role of another member, by making him or her aware of the value they see in his or her contribution to the success of the whole, it increases that individual's level of commitment and dependability. Each of these factors, when applied to the work of an Advisory Council, will increase the probability of success.

Developing a Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Community Advisory Council in a community requires a simple but strategic and sensible approach. All members must believe that they are listened to and accepted, invited to participate, and valued for their contribution. In this respect, adults are not so different from kids!

*Dr. Judi Kosterman has been employed as a high school teacher, counselor, principal, school district superintendent, and university professor. Her doctorate is in Educational Leadership and Addiction Studies from Seattle University. She has been recognized as Educator of the Year from the National Federation of Parents for Drug-Free Youth. In 1990, she became the State Drug Czar of Washington State, where she led the statewide effort on Community Mobilization Against Substance Abuse. In 1994, Dr. Kosterman joined the Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America (CADCA) as its Vice President for Training & Technical Assistance. In 1999, she moved to the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy as the Assistant Director of the National Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign.*

*She will be appearing in The Challenge again soon as she explains step two of Principle #2, establishing measurable goals and objectives.*



**Nothing ensures the collapse of the Council's work more quickly than losing the active participation of its members**

# Give us your opinion and we'll give you a gift!

Since when do you get a gift for expressing your opinion? Fill out this survey and that's just what will happen!

*The Challenge* wants to serve you better. Educators and prevention practitioners are always on the lookout for current information on school-based prevention efforts. *The Challenge* wants to be the newsletter you reach for when looking for that information. To accomplish that, we need to know what you think of *The Challenge*.

Please complete the following survey and mail it back to us by February 29, 2000. To thank you for your time, we will send you a free gift!

**1** Do you receive *The Challenge* newsletter regularly?

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No

**2** How many issues have you received in 1999 (in addition to this one)?

- ☐ 3  
☐ 2  
☐ 1

**3** When you receive *The Challenge* in the mail, do you:

- ☐ Read it thoroughly?  
☐ Skim through it?  
☐ Don't read it at all?  
☐ Pass it on to a colleague?

**4** What is your overall impression of *The Challenge*?

- ☐ Excellent  
☐ Good  
☐ Fair  
☐ Poor

**5** Do you feel *The Challenge* newsletter's contents are:

- |               | Yes                      | No                       |
|---------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Well written? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Informative?  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Useful?       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

**6** The following are recent issues of *The Challenge*. Please rate each one according to its usefulness to your work. (4 = excellent; 1 = poor; n/a = not read or received).

	4	3	2	1	n/a
The Principles of Effectiveness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The Drug-Exposed Child	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The Data Game (Principle #1)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Taking a Picture of Teenagers (Principle #1)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hurdles to Creating Safe Environments	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Beyond Training (violence prevention)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**7** What is your overall impression of the layout and design of the newsletter?

- ☐ Excellent  
☐ Good  
☐ Fair  
☐ Poor

**8** Specifically, does the newsletter

- |                      | Yes                      | No                       |
|----------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Have too many pages? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Have too few pages?  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Have appeal?         | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

**9** What topics would you like to see covered in *The Challenge*? (Please check all that apply).

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Research-based programs | <input type="checkbox"/> School/community partnerships |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Evaluation              | <input type="checkbox"/> Violence prevention           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Needs assessments       | <input type="checkbox"/> Drug prevention               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Discipline policies     | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Program implementation  |  |

## A little about yourself

**10** Do you work in

- ☐ A school?  
☐ An educational agency other than a school?  
☐ A community-based organization?  
☐ Other? \_\_\_\_\_

**11** If you work in a school, what grades are in your school?

- |                                 |                                      |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> preK-5 | <input type="checkbox"/> 9-12        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 6-8    | <input type="checkbox"/> 10-12       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 7-9    | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |

**12** What is your job title?

- ☐ School administrator  
☐ Teacher  
☐ Counselor  
☐ Nurse  
☐ Prevention specialist  
☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

If you would like to receive a free gift as a thank you for filling out this survey, we will need to know the following information. (If you do not wish to receive this gift, it's not necessary to complete this section).

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State and Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Fax number \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

**For mailing instructions, please see the other side of this survey.**

## To mail this survey:

1. Make sure you've answered every question. If you want a free gift, please be sure to write your name and address where indicated.
2. Tear (or cut) this page out from the rest of the newsletter and fold the page into thirds (the survey should be facing inward). Check that our address shows on the outside.
3. Tape or staple the survey closed.
4. Place a first class stamp in the position indicated.

Thank you!

FROM: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Affix  
postage  
here

The American Council for Drug Education  
Attn: *The Challenge* readership survey  
164 West 74th Street  
New York, NY 10023

Do you know a colleague (or two) who would like to receive *The Challenge*?  
Place them on our free mailing list!

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

City, State, and Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Fax number \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

City, State, and Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Fax number \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

The following publications, phone numbers and websites are a sampling of the items available to readers who are looking for more information on safe and drug-free schools.

## PUBLICATIONS

### PREVENTING YOUTH HATE CRIME: A MANUAL FOR SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITIES

Provides information regarding hate crimes, their effects on schools and communities, and preventative methods, as well as statistical data. Call 1-877-433-7827 to obtain a copy.

### KEEPING SCHOOLS OPEN AS COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTERS (1997)

Describes how to turn schools into Community Learning Centers by opening them before and after school hours. It provides specific suggestions for estimating typical costs, developing a budget, and designing an effective program. Includes lists for further information and assistance. Call 1-877-433-7827 to obtain a copy.

### EARLY WARNING, TIMELY RESPONSE: A GUIDE TO SAFE SCHOOLS (1998)

This manual describes research-based practices designed to help schools and communities identify warning signs and develop response plans. Published by the Departments of Education and Justice. Call 1-877-433-7827 to obtain a copy.

### START WITH THE FACTS (1999)

This product catalog includes a comprehensive, reproducible chart of 31 drugs with addictive potential, and their effects on the body and mind, published by ACDE. Call 1-800-488-DRUG for more information.

### DRUG AWARENESS SERIES (1998)

Twelve different brochures detailing the latest scientific research on various drugs and current issues of interest, published by ACDE. Call 1-800-488-DRUG for more information.

### NATIONAL CLEARINGHOUSE FOR ALCOHOL & DRUG INFORMATION

A centralized source for information about alcohol and other drugs, including publications, fact sheets, posters, and videotapes. Most services are provided free. Call 1-800-729-6686 for information.

## TOLL FREE NUMBERS

1-877-433-7827

U.S. Department of Education Publications

1-800-DRUGHELP

24-hour, confidential information & referral service

1-800-488-DRUG

American Council for Drug Education

1-800-638-8736

Juvenile Justice Clearinghouse

## WEBSITES

[www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/SDFS](http://www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/SDFS)

U.S. Dept. of Education Safe and Drug-Free Schools

[www.ed.gov/pubs/edpubs.html](http://www.ed.gov/pubs/edpubs.html)

U.S. Dept. of Education on-line ordering system

[www.thechallenge.org](http://www.thechallenge.org)

The Challenge newsletter on-line

[www.acde.org](http://www.acde.org)

American Council for Drug Education

[www.drughelp.org](http://www.drughelp.org)

On-line confidential information & referral service

[www.ncjrs.org/ojjhome](http://www.ncjrs.org/ojjhome)

Office of Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention

# THE CHALLENGE

Volume 9, number 3

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ACDE welcomes all new recipients to *The Challenge*. This newsletter is distributed free to its readers. If you would like to be placed on the mailing list or know others who would like to receive *The Challenge*, please call ACDE at 800-488-DRUG or send an e-mail to [thechallenge@phoenixhouse.org](mailto:thechallenge@phoenixhouse.org)

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